

from us the scale and scope of their achievement. They have done their work so completely that nobody to-day dreams of writing the history of any epoch without building into his survey some account of the condition of the working class, and, if he is writing modern history, of working class organisations.

Such, however, was not the case in the second half of the nineteenth century. When Mrs Webb consulted W E H Lecky as to what the working classes of England were doing and thinking in the first half-century after the Industrial Revolution, his reply "led me nowhere"; he told her in sum, that they were doing nothing in particular in effect, that they did not signify. When, in their own Preface to then *Histoiy*^ they mildly remark that

"The history of the general movement, to which we have confined ourselves heie, will be found to be part of the history of England," political

they were not emitting a universally accepted
platitude,
very far from that Nor did everybody, then,
agree with,
still less practise, the statement that follows

"In spite of all the pleas of modern historians for less history of the actions of governments, and more descriptions of the manners and customs of the governed, it remains true that history, however it may relieve and enliven itself with descriptions of the manners and morals of the people, must, if it is to be history at all, follow the course of continuous organisations. The history of a perfectly democratic State would be at once the history of a government and of a people. The history of Trade Unionism is the history of a State within our State, and one so jealously

democratic that to know it well is to know the
English working
man as no reader of middle-class histories can
know him "

At this point, they came into sharp collision
with then
accepted opinion There were, in the late
'nineties, plenty
of people, some philanthropic, others merely
enlightened,
who were prepared to take an interest in,
and feel a
respect for, the individual working-man, and
to strive,